

nara roesler

cristina canale



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b. 1961, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

lives and works in Berlin, Germany

Cristina Canale rose to prominence following her participation in the iconic group exhibition *Como vai você, Geração 80?*, at Escola de Artes Visuais do Parque Lage (EAV Parque Lage) in Rio de Janeiro in 1984. Like many of her colleagues from the so-called 'Generation 80', her early works reveal the influence of the international context as painting resurfaced, especially with that of German Neo-expressionism. Loaded with visual elements and thick paint, her early paintings have a material or textural characteristic that is reinforced by her use of contrasting and vivid colors. In the early 1990s, Canale moved to Germany to study in Düsseldorf under the guidance of the Dutch conceptual artist Jan Dibbets. Her compositions soon acquired a sense of spatiality, as she began to incorporate the use of planes and depth, while also adding greater fluidity to her use of colors.

Cristina Canale's work is often based on prosaic everyday scenes, which she extracts from advertising photography. Her paintings result in elaborate compositions that intertwine the figurative and the abstract, often blurring one with the other. According to the curator Tiago Mesquita, Canale's production opposes the quest for constituting structures of the image, which artists such as Gerhard Richter and Robert Ryman engage with, tackling instead 'the image and established genres of painting in a subjective manner following the belief in a singular experience.'

cover Jackie, 2020 (detail)

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selected solo exhibitions

- *Memento Vivere*, Nara Roesler, São Paulo, Brazil (2023)
- *The Encounter*, Nara Roesler, New York, USA (2021)
- *Cabeças/Falantes*, Nara Roesler, São Paulo, Brazil (2018)
- *Cristina Canale: Zwischen den Welten*, Kunstforum Markert Gruppe, Hamburg, Germany (2015)
- *Entremundos*, Paço Imperial, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2014)
- *Espelho e Memória – Spiegel und Erinnerung*, Galerie Atelier III, Barmstedt, Germany (2014)
- *Arredores e rastros*, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro (MAM Rio), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2010)

selected group exhibitions

- *Co/respondences: Brazil and abroad*, Nara Roesler, New York, USA (2023)
- *Ateliê de Gravura: da tradição à experimentação*, Fundação Iberê Camargo (FIC), Porto Alegre, Brazil (2019)
- *Mulheres na Coleção MAR*, Museu de Arte do Rio (MAR), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2018)
- *MACS Fora de Casa – Poéticas do feminino*, Sesc Sorocaba, Sorocaba, Brazil (2018)
- *Alucinações à beira mar*, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro (MAM Rio), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2017)
- *Land der Zukunft*, Lichthof – Auswärtiges Amt, Berlin, Germany (2013)

selected collections

- Museu de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand (MASP), São Paulo, Brazil
- Museum No Hero, Delden, Netherlands
- Instituto Itaú Cultural, São Paulo, Brazil
- Hall Art Foundation, Reading, USA
- Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo (MAC USP), São Paulo, Brazil
- Museu de Arte Contemporânea de Niterói (MAC-Niterói), Niterói, Brazil
- Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro (MAM Rio), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
- Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil

4	paintings after 1996
37	paintings 1993–1996
43	paintings 1991–1993
46	paintings 1985–1991
50	works on paper

paintings after 1996

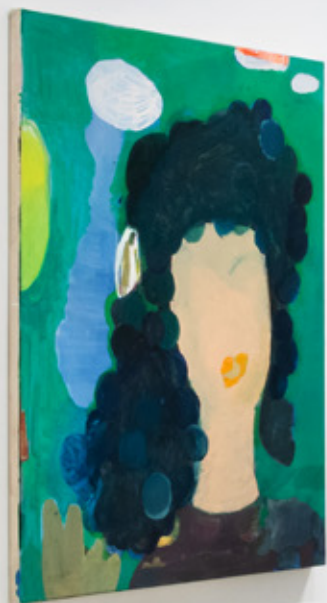
Celebrated for her striking compositions featuring intricate geometric patterns, colorful interiors and landscapes, uncanny groupings of characters and mysterious domestic scenes, Canale intertwines the power of figures with the richness of carefully constructed, abstract backgrounds. In her recent focus on faces, the artist establishes a dialogue with the history of portraiture and stresses elements frequently regarded as accessory, articulating ornamental supplements with faceless figures, represented with unique, expressive features related to their physiognomic singularity. An inquiry on femininity, these paintings also navigate between personal stories and social depictions, inviting the viewer to complete the missing elements by bringing out a sense of intimacy and opening up for alternate narratives to be built around the depicted characters.

Jackie, 2020
acrylic, oil and linen on canvas
110 x 100 cm | 43.3 x 39.37 in



The house and the dreams, 2022
mixed media on linen
170 x 190 x 3,5 cm
66.9 x 74.8 x 1.4 in



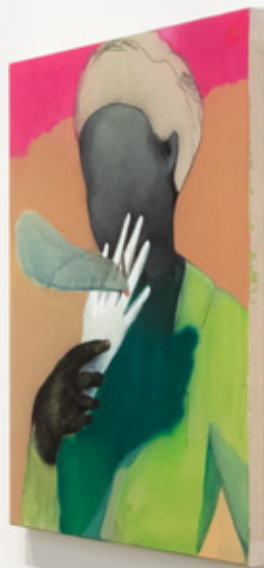


←
exhibition view of
The Encounter, 2021
Galeria Nara Roesler, New York, USA

The tree and the sperm, 2022
mixed media on linen
170 x 190 x 3 cm
66.9 x 74.8 x 1.2 in

←
exhibition view of
The Encounter, 2021
Galeria Nara Roesler, New York, USA









←
exhibition view of
The Encounter, 2021
Galeria Nara Roesler, New York, USA

Sincronías, 2022
mixed media on linen
170 x 190 cm
66.9 x 74.8 in



Lady, 2020
mixed media on canvas
110 x 100 cm | 43.3 x 39.37 in

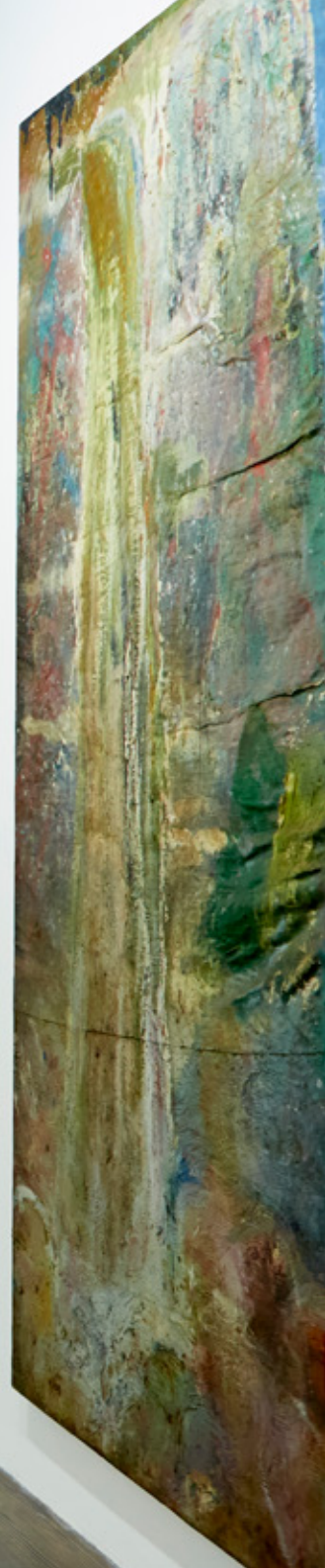


←
exhibition view
Cabeças/Falantes, 2018
Galeria Nara Roesler, São Paulo, Brazil
photo © Everton Ballardín

Smoke, 2017
mixed media on canvas
100 x 90 cm | 74.8 x 94.48 in

→
exhibition view of
Things and Being, 2017
Galeria Nara Roesler, New York, USA





Today, Canale's painting has intertwined both, the fluidity of her early work and the minimalism or lucidity of her later pieces. Her compositions are characterized by figurative elements always on the verge of an impending dissolution into abstraction. In curator Clarissa Diniz's words, 'in her paintings, it is mainly through color that these intensities are configured and negotiate space, density and movement among themselves. In the artist's production, from the outset it has been color that has 'dimensional power', founding pictorial arrangements that organize levels in the space, even though they do not behave in accordance with the planar preciseness of the Euclidean tradition.' With a unique use of color, her landscapes seem to portray a fluid, almost liquid-like world, which has distinguished her work since the beginning of her career, while her portraits display uncircumscribed figures, uprooting the traditional settings of a defined subject and a subsidiary background. Ultimately, her iconography is featureless and somewhat non-hierarchical, and yet, the few recognizable elements that emerge in her compositions, between fields of color, anchor the work into our reality.

Rainy, 2016
mixed media on canvas
170 x 140 cm | 66.92 x 55.11 in





Beauty and triangles, 2016
mixed media on canvas
165 x 140 cm | 64.96 x 55.11 in

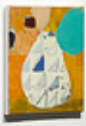


MAE, 2015
mixed media on canvas
100 x 105 cm | 64.96 x 55.11 in



Medusa, 2014
mixed media on canvas
90 x 100 cm | 35.4 x 39.4 in

→
exhibition view
Entremundos, 2014
Paço Imperial, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil





exhibition view
Protagonista e Domingo, 2013
Instituto Figueiredo Ferraz (IFF),
Ribeirão Preto, SP, Brazil



'Until my stay in Germany I used to avoid the formal affirmation of lines. Over time the painted image gradually became more important and more sophisticated, being more specific, gaining more particular outlines. Currently I assume the figure (or shape) as a key component. I come to a certain universe (children in the landscape, vacations, tourists, photographing, pets and their habitats, empty armchairs etc.) and to themes I can relate to and which might be pictorially rich. From there I develop a series of works around that motif, until I feel it is drained to the last drop.

Sometimes a motif returns later inside another [...]. Photos taken without great pretensions, family albums. More recently I started to include motifs from magazines, images that I am not intimate with [...]. I created two threads for myself: one that talks about the relation between figuration and abstraction, free material versus conducted material and another that strains the narrative and the non-narrative. A minimum dose of context to the maximum contextualization possible. If I have not yet reached that, I intend to...'

—Cristina Canale

Mergulhadores, 2012
mixed media on canvas
190 x 240 cm | 74.8 x 94.48 in



exhibition view
Cabeça-tronco-membros, 2012
Bolsa de Arte, Porto Alegre, Brazil

→
exhibition view
Sem palavras, 2011
Galeria Nara Roesler,
São Paulo, Brazil

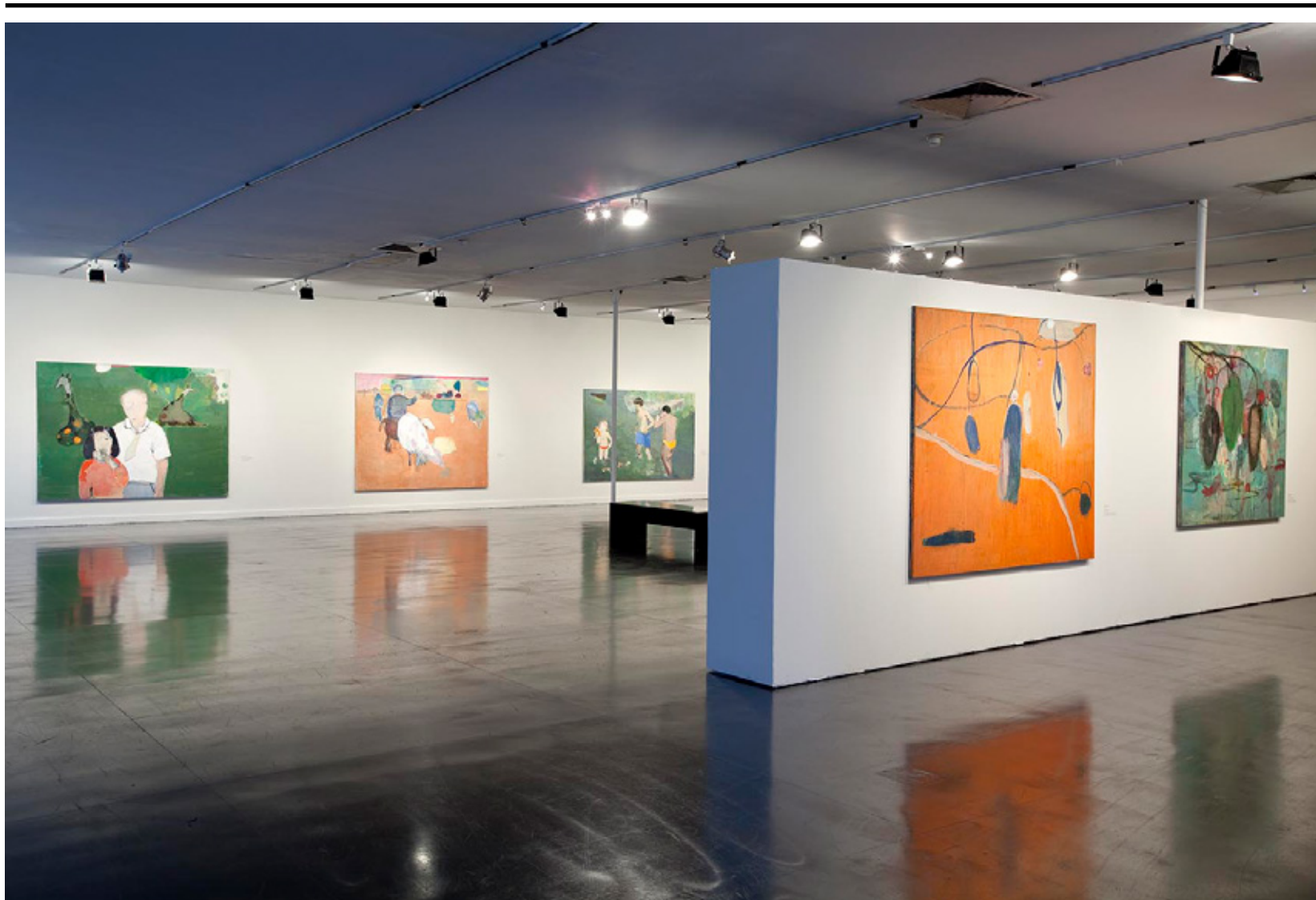




exhibition view
6ª Bienal de Curitiba, 2011
Curitiba, Brazil
photo © Marina Rheingantz



La chair est triste, 2010
mixed media on canvas
200 x 200 cm | 78.74 x 78.74 in



exhibition view
Arredores e rastros, 2010
Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de
Janeiro (MAM Rio),
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

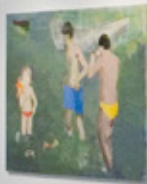


Cão no verão, 2009
mixed media on paper
50 x 65 cm | 19.68 x 25.59 in



Manhã de sol, 2008
mixed media on canvas
190 x 240 cm | 74.8 x 94.48 in

→
exhibition view
Cristina Canale, 2007
Instituto Tomie Ohtake (ITO),
São Paulo, Brazil





Mãe e filha II, 2007
mixed media on canvas
140 x 165 cm | 55.11 x 64.96 in



Avô e neta, 2007
mixed media on canvas
195 x 250 cm | 76.77 x 98.42 in



Guia, 2006
mixed media on canvas
90 x 100 cm | 35.43 x 39.37 in



Casa da esquina II, 2005
mixed media on canvas
145 x 270 cm | 57.08 x 106.29 in



Pescador, 2005
mixed media on canvas
80 x 100 cm | 31.49 x 39.37 in

→
exhibition view
Amor proibido, 2000
Paço Imperial,
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil





Poltrona anos 60, 1999
mixed media on canvas
140 x 160 cm | 55.11 x 62.99 in



paintings 1993–1996

moving to germany & zoom botânico

Canale's move to Düsseldorf triggered an important change in the artist's practice. While the landscapes she painted in the 1980s tended to be rather dense, rich in paint and figuration, the first works she produced in Germany were somewhat minimalist. Her compositions were constructed on the basis of lines and color marks—Canale began to play with transparency and opacity. In Fernando Cocchiarale's words, 'it was a process of purification. Canale revisited her canons, diluting her works' pictorial materiality, closeness to objects, overpowering of shape over matter and by breaking the expressive tension that characterized her paintings.' She went back to working on paper, drawing from observation in parks, zoos and in botanical gardens, creating lucid and unencumbered images, which she later on transposed to larger formats and canvases.

Conchas, 1999
mixed media on canvas
200 x 260 cm | 78.7 x 102.3 in



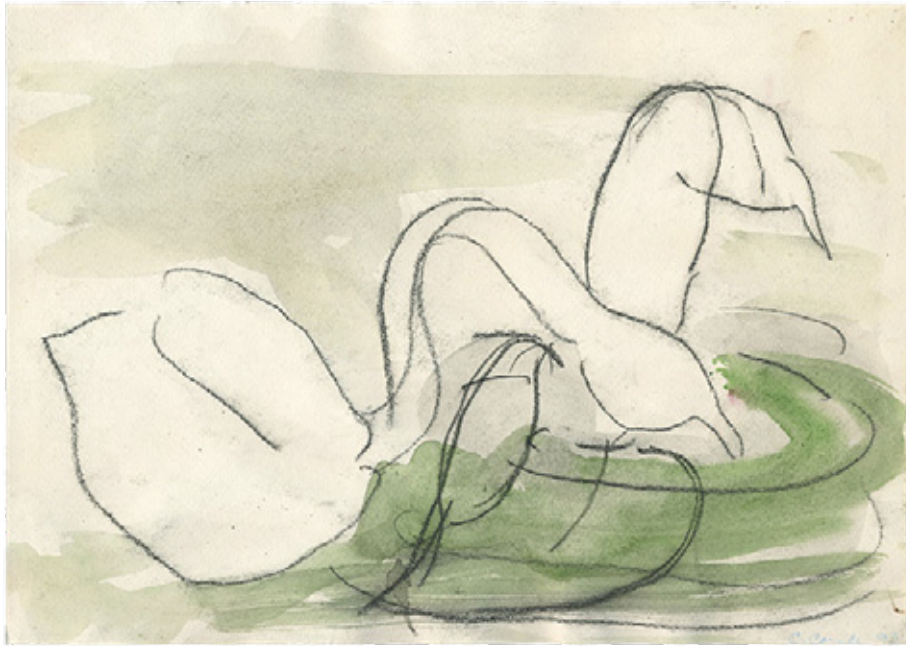
Paraíso, 1998
mixed media on canvas
190 x 240 cm | 74.8 x 94.4 in



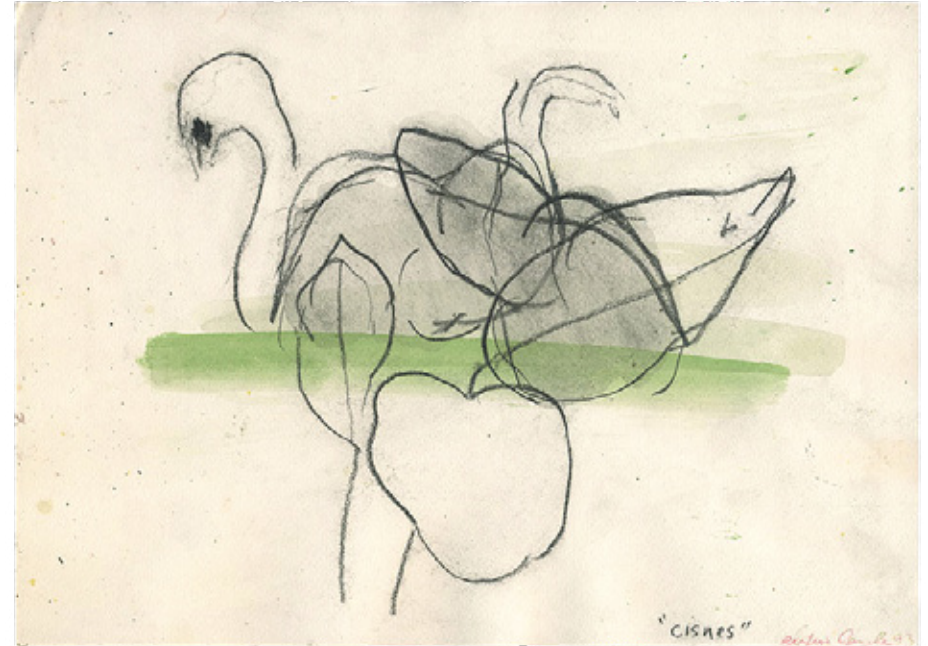
Grande Flor II, 1995
mixed media on canvas
210 x 140 cm | 82.67 x 55.11 in



Untitled, 1994
mixed media on canvas
80 x 100 cm | 31.49 x 39.37 in



Untitled, 1993
 mixed media on paper
 21,1 x 29,6 cm | 8.3 x 11.65 in



Untitled, 1993
 mixed media on paper
 21,1 x 29,6 cm | 8.3 x 11.65 in



Untitled, 1993
mixed media on paper
24 x 32 cm | 9.44 x 12.59 in

paintings 1991–1993

In 1991, Canale developed the body of work which she calls *muro de flor*, or 'flower wall'. In these works, the artist covered the canvas fully. She painted innumerable flowers all over the surfaces, stripping the composition of any horizon, depth, background or foreground. Instead, the canvas became somewhat equal throughout, with a non-hierarchical disposition of iconography, imbued with a materiality inherent to the thickness of her stroke.



Brasilianas, 1992
mixed media on canvas
240 x 350 cm | 94.4 x 137.7 in



O jardim é o lugar da serpente, 1991
mixed media on canvas
215 x 340 cm | 84.6 x 133.8 in



Untitled, 1991
oil on canvas
235 x 315 cm | 92.5 x 124 in



Arquipélago, 1990
oil on canvas
140 x 160 cm | 55.1 x 62.9 in

paintings 1985–1991

‘Beginning in 1985, I stopped working with paper and turned to canvas. I briefly worked with acrylic paint but soon dedicated myself to working with oil. I also chose to move away from figurative work, removing the human figure from my compositions. Instead, I used the city’s architectural shapes, the Arcos da Lapa (or Lapa Arches), the cathedral, viaducts etc. as initial inspiration from which I extracted their archetypal forms until reaching basics, such as circles or crosses, used to build my landscapes (they were harsh, reminiscent of cemeteries or the aftermath of a war). That geometricism lasted a bit over a year. It became progressively softer until it brought me to more liquid landscapes: the crosses became islands for example, and the circles, sea waves. I reached a world full of water, seas, rivers, lagoons, surrounded by mountains and islands, [...], backgrounds of Renaissance paintings and of Rio de Janeiro, of course. Once I reached landscapes, I breathed more freely, I was able to release color and material.’

—Cristina Canale



We are the children, 1988
mixed media on canvas
180 x 230 cm | 70.8 x 90.5 in



Vera Cruz, 1985
oil on canvas
210 x 160 cm | 82.6 x 62.9 in



Os sobreviventes, 1985
oil on canvas
175 x 100cm | 68.8 x 39.3 in

works on paper

In 1983, having graduated from University, Cristina Canale began to focus on her career as an artist. The first body of work she produced is made up of works on paper, on which she used gouache and pastels. Though the medium she employed was destined for paper, her pieces came closer to both the process and aesthetics of painting, somewhat foreseeing her full dedication to the genre, which began in 1985.

Canale's early works on paper capture well the fundamentals of her training at the Escola de Artes Visuais do Parque Lage, where she studied painting with John Nicholson, Charles Watson and Luiz Ernesto, as well as collage with Nelly Gutmacher. Her production between 1983 and 1984 frequently combines both, with installations made up of painted paper, cut and superimposed.

Untitled, 1992
Mixed media on bonded
paper on eucatex
aprox. (about) 80 x 60 cm
31.5 x 23.6 in





Untitled, 1985
Mixed media on bonded
paper on eucatex
aprox. (about) 80 x 60 cm
31.5 x 23.6 in



—
Untitled, 1985
Mixed media on bonded
paper on eucatex
about 80 x 60 cm | 31.5 x 23.6 in



exhibition view

Como vai você, geração 80?, 1984
Escola de Artes Visuais do Parque
Lage (EAV Parque Lage),
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

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